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ABSTRACT

This annotated bibliography contains 31 references of articles and papers in the ERIC database that deal with communication apprehension (CA). The first section provides strategies for instructors and students to alleviate communication apprehension, speech anxiety, stage fright, and other problems people have with public speaking. The second section presents several programs that have utilized these and other strategies to help with fear and avoidance of communication. Articles and papers in the last section deal with recent research on CA. (MS)

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Focused Access to Selected Topics
a bibliography by the
Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills

Communication Apprehension

by Michael Shermis

FAST Bib No. 15 RCS

It would be rare to find a classroom where someone was not experiencing communication apprehension (CA) or some form of speech anxiety. As a matter of fact, fear and avoidance of public speaking is quite common. Knowing this leads to several questions: What is CA? What causes CA? What are the consequences of CA? How can CA be prevented or reduced? Documents in the ERIC database cite several sources that treat these and related questions on this topic.

The first section of this bibliography provides strategies for instructors and students to alleviate CA, speech anxiety, stage fright, and other problems people have with public speaking. The second section presents several programs that have utilized these and other strategies to help with fear and avoidance of communication. Articles and papers in the last section deal with recent research on CA.

Abstracts for some of the articles cited here have been abbreviated to conform to the *FAST Bib* format. The ED numbers for sources included in *Resources in Education* have been included to enable the user to go directly to microfiche collections, to order from the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS), or to go to *RIE* for the full abstract on those sources not available through EDRS. The citations to journals are from the *Current Index to Journals in Education*, and these articles can be acquired most economically from library collections or through interlibrary loans. Reprint services are also available from University Microfilms International (UMI) and from the Original Article Tearsheet Service (OATS) of the Institute for Scientific Information.

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Strategies

Biggers, Thompson; Masterson, John T. "Communication Apprehension as a Personality Trait: An Emotional Defense of a Concept," *Communication Monographs*, v51 n4 p381-90 Dec 1984.

Applies an emotion-based theory of human response to resolve conceptual and measurement problems associated with anxiety. Supports the conceptualization of CA as a personality trait predisposing certain individuals to higher levels of anxiety in oral communication.

Boohar, Richard K.; Seiler, William J. "Speech Communication Anxiety: An Impediment to Academic Achievement in the University Classroom," *Journal of Classroom Interaction*, v18 n1 p23-27 Win 1982.

Examines the achievement levels of college students taking a bioethics course who demonstrated high and low degrees of speech anxiety. Finds that students with high speech anxiety interacted less with instructors and did not achieve as well as other students. Suggests strategies instructors can use to help students.

Brownell, Winifred W.; Katula, Richard A. "The Communication Anxiety Graph: A Classroom Tool for Managing Speech Anxiety," *Communication Quarterly*, v32 n3 p243-49 Sum 1984.

Describes the use of the Communication Anxiety Graph (CAG) to help students trace the pattern of their anxiety when making a speech. Provides advice for student speakers based on when their anxiety peak occurs.

Cohen, Marlene C. "An Overcoming Speech Anxiety Course for the Community." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Eastern Communication Association, 1983. 9 p. [ED 232 226]

Describes a noncredit course called "Overcoming Speech Anxiety" that used four different approaches: (1) creating a support group atmosphere; (2) employing relaxation exercises and systematic desensitization techniques; (3) improving confidence through cognitive restructuring; and (4) completing an abbreviated public speaking assignment.

Holbrook, Hilary Taylor. "ERIC/RCS Report: The Quiet Student in Your Classroom," *Language Arts*, v64 n5 p554-57 Sep 1987.

Defines CA as fear or anxiety associated with either real or anticipated communication with another person, and discusses its causes, consequences, and prevention.

Landy, Robert J. "Ready for Speech: Communication Skills through Sociodrama," *English Journal*, v76 n5 p68-71 Sep 1987.

Describes a program to help secondary school students develop speech skills by exploring social issues through role-playing. Notes that this method motivates discouraged students, reduces communication anxiety, improves research skills, fosters appropriate verbal and nonverbal skills, and stimulates affective learning.

Lucas, Jenifer. "Communication Apprehension in the ESL Classroom: Getting Our Students to Talk," *Foreign Language Annals*, v17 n6 p593-98 Dec 1984.

Defines the problem of CA, i.e., fear of oral communication, and its effects on teaching English as a second language (ESL). Focuses on the specific problems of Japanese ESL students. Suggests and explains classroom techniques designed to alleviate anxiety and to promote and practice communication.

Osenlund, Kathryn. "Speech Videotaping," *Exercise Exchange*, v29 n2 p41-42 Spr 1984.

Describes a nonthreatening method for introducing videotaping to a speech class by allowing students to construct videotaped projects, such as news programs or interviews in groups.

Stewart, Robert. *Strategies for Reducing Fear in Students of Public Speaking*. 1983. 10 p. [ED 257 143]

Suggests several strategies to reduce speech anxiety or CA.

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Suid, Murray. "Speaking of Speaking," *Instructor*, v93 n9 p56-58 May 1984.

Offers a variety of activities to help children develop skill in public speaking. Asserts that confidence is built when children practice presenting themselves both visually and orally.

Watson, Arden K. "The Confidence Model: An Alternative Approach to Alleviating Communication Apprehension." Paper presented at the 68th Annual Meeting of the Speech Communication Association, 1982. 9 p. [ED 222 967]

Explains how the confidence model attempts to provide instruction in anxiety reduction and skill development, combining the features of both the behavior therapy and the rhetoritherapy theories of CA. Contends that both for alleviating speech anxiety and developing oral communication skills, the confidence model appears to be an excellent alternative to college basic speech courses.

Watson, Arden K. "Helping Communication Apprehensive Students as Part of the Developmental Speech Course." Paper presented at the 73rd Annual Meeting of the Speech Communication Association, 1987. 25 p. [ED 295 260]

Discusses how developmental college students may experience the inhibiting fear of CA. Suggests that the alleviation of CA, whether related to conditioned anxiety, negative cognitive appraisal, or skills deficit, may be approached through one or a combination of the following approaches: (1) systematic desensitization – a six-step procedure, including relaxation techniques, development of hierarchies, combining relaxation and imagery, and a written assignment; (2) cognitive modification – a seven-step procedure in which students learn to understand unreasonable beliefs about communication and how to change those beliefs; and (3) goal setting – a five-step procedure in which students turn abstract goals into specific plans for behavior.

Watson, Arden K.; Dodd, Carley H. "Alleviating Communication Apprehension through Rational Emotive Therapy: A Comparative Evaluation," *Communication Education*, v33 n3 p257-66 Jul 1984.

Describes a Rational Emotive Therapy (RET) approach as a classroom method for reducing students' CA. Compares RET with two other classroom methods (desensitization and communication skills training) and concludes that all three methods work equally well.

Special Programs

Ambler, Bob. "The Speech Anxiety Program at UTK: A Training Program for Students with High Public Speaking Anxiety." Paper presented at the 68th Annual Meeting of the Speech Communication Association, 1982. 13 p. [ED 220 903]

Describes a special section of the public speaking curriculum, a "speech anxiety" program, taught by faculty and graduate students from the speech and theater department, educational psychology department, and staff from the counseling services center at the University of Tennessee (Knoxville).

Bozik, Mary. "An Alternative Approach to the Treatment of Stage Fright in the Required Public Speaking Course." Paper presented at the 68th Annual Meeting of the Speech Communication Association, 1982. 13 p. [ED 220 905]

Describes a program that created stage fright sections within the basic speech course at the University of Illinois. Finds that students in these sections were able to define stage fright and recognize its common symptoms, describe personal symptoms and their physical and psychological causes, state and use methods for controlling stage fright, and exhibit normal levels of physical manifestations of stage fright during class presentations.

Glaser, Susan R.; and others. "Conversational Skills Instruction for Communication Apprehension and Avoidance: Evaluation of a Treatment Program," *Communication Research: An International Quarterly*, v10 n4 p582-613 Oct 1983.

Describes and evaluates a conversational skills program designed to teach apprehensive communicators how to develop comfortable and effective social behavior in a variety of interpersonal contexts.

Kelly, Lynne. "Treating Reticent Students: The Pennsylvania State University Program." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the International Communication Association, 1982. 24 p. [ED 221 893]

Describes a reticence program instituted at Pennsylvania State University intended to provide special instruction for students who report fear and avoidance of communication.

McKiernan, John. "Getting Our Act Together: A Justification for a Speaking Lab." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Central States Speech Association, 1984. 25 p. [ED 251 865]

Describes a speaking laboratory at the University of Iowa that parallels existing reading and writing labs and that is based on three approaches to the fear of communication: systematic desensitization, cognitive modification, and skills training.

Tate, Eugene D. "A Guided Design Unit on Communication Apprehension, Reticence and Shyness." Paper presented at the International Society for Individualized Instruction, 1984. 41 p. [ED 261 445]

Describes a course in social psychology developed to help students explore CA, reticence, and shyness.

Recent Research

Ambler, Bob. "Communication Apprehension and People Orientations." Paper presented at the 72nd Annual Meeting of the Speech Communication Association, 1986. 13 p. [ED 279 050]

Examines the relationship between CA and general people orientations.

Behnke, Ralph R.; and others. "The Communication of Public Speaking Anxiety," *Communication Education*, v36 n2 p138-41 Apr 1987.

Investigates the relationship between beginning public speakers' self-reported performance anxiety and audience perception of that anxiety. Indicates that audiences perceive speaker anxiety levels to be lower during performance than the speakers themselves report.

Daly, John A. "Communication Apprehension in the College Classroom," *New Directions for Teaching and Learning*, n26 p21-31 Jun 1986.

Presents research and theory about CA that offer ways of understanding and dealing with this barrier to learning.

Daniel, Arlie. "Communication Apprehension and the Use of Video-Tapes." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Speech Communication Association, 1983. 20 p. [ED 236 745]

Investigates the relationship between students' CA levels and their attitudes toward the use of video recording in a basic speech course. Finds that speech teachers should use videotaping cautiously in beginning courses. Suggests that student skills are more likely to be enhanced by videotaping in advanced elective courses where the levels of CA are generally lower.

Kinzer, Harold J. "Video Feedback in the Classroom: Possible Consequences for the Communication Apprehensive." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Western Speech Communication Association, 1985. 29 p. [ED 257 168]

Points out that a review of the literature suggests that the use of video playback of classroom assignments for students who are CA, shy, or unassertive is potentially harmful.

Littlefield, Robert S.; Sellnow, Timothy L. "The Use of Self-Defense as a Means for Reducing Stage-Fright in Beginning Speakers," *Communication Education*, v36 n1 p62-64 Jan 1987.

Indicates that the "Sharing Feelings Speech" assignment failed to support the hypothesis that self-disclosure reduces stage fright in public speaking situations more than other forms of public speaking.

Lake, Robert L.; Adams, W. Clifton. "Effects of the Videotape Recorder on Levels of Anxiety, Exhibitionism, and Reticence in High School Speech Students," *Communication Education*, v33 n4 p333-36 Oct 1984.

Concludes that the videotape recorder can be used effectively as an instructional feedback tool without fear of serious negative effects on speaker performance or on the emotional condition of students.

McDowell, Earl E. "An Assessment Study of the Communication Reticence of High School Students." Paper presented at the 35th Annual Meeting of the International Communication Association, 1985. 27 p. [ED 265 591]

Examines the communication reticence of high school students enrolled in required speech and writing courses. Finds that over 40% of the students were apprehensive about public speaking and over 30% did not enjoy writing.

Newburger, Craig Alan; Daniel, Arlie V. "Self-Concept, Communication Apprehension and Self-Confrontation: A Relational Study." Paper presented at the 35th Annual Meeting of the International Communication Association, 1985. 24 p. [ED 253 896]

Examines the relationship between the personality constructs of self-concept and CA and the use of self-confrontation (self-viewing of videotaped speeches) as a potential self-concept enhancement strategy.

Rossi, Ana Maria; Todd-Mancillas, William R. "Visualization: An Alternative or Supplemental Procedure in the Treatment of Excessive Communication Apprehension." Paper presented at the 8th Annual Conference of the American Association for the Study of Mental Imagery, 1986. 14 p. [ED 272 946]

Uses the extensive research on CA as the basis for a description and comparison of three conventional approaches toward the treatment of excessive communication apprehension: systematic desensitization, social skills development, and cognitive modification/rational emotive therapy.

Stacks, Don W.; Stone, John D. "An Examination of the Effect of Basic Speech Courses, Self-Concept, and Self-Disclosure on Communication Apprehension," *Communication Education*, v33 n4 p317-31 Oct 1984.

Shows that a basic course in speech communication (1) produced significant reduction in students' CA scores; (2) yielded more positiveness about self-disclosure; and (3) reduced discrepancies between self-concepts and ideal self-concepts.

Watson, Arden K. "Alleviation of Communication Apprehension: An Individualized Approach." Paper presented at the 77th Annual Meeting of the Eastern Communication Association, 1986. 20 p. [ED 275 011]

Reiterates that the use of an individualized approach to the alleviation of CA has been shown to increase students' class interaction and to improve their verbal skills. Suggests that since students develop CA in various ways, individualized methods should be used to assess and remedy different types of CA.

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